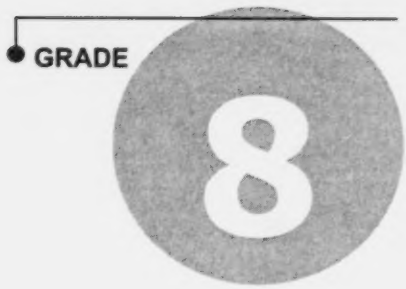
2010 | 2011

Grade 8

Curriculum
Handbook
for Parents

Alberta

Government of Alberta



Curriculum Handbook for **Parents**

2010–2011

This Curriculum Handbook provides parents with information about the Grade 8 curriculum. It includes:

- selected learning outcomes for each subject area from the provincial curriculum
- links to the Alberta Education Web site where more information can be found
- a questionnaire.

Alberta Education

This document, along with most Alberta Education documents, can be found on the Web site at http://education.alberta.ca.

Parent documents referenced in this handbook, along with most Alberta Education documents, are available for purchase from:

Learning Resources Centre
12360 – 142 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T5L 4X9
Telephone: 780–427–2767
Toll-free: 310–0000 (inside Alberta)
Fax: 780–422–9750
Internet: http://lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.html

Telephone numbers referred to in this handbook can be reached, toll-free inside Alberta, by dialling 310–0000.

Arts, Communications and Citizenship
Telephone: 780–427–2984
Fax: 780–422–3745
E-mail: curric.contact@education.gov.ab.ca

Digital Design and Resource Authorization
Telephone: 780–427–2984
Fax: 780–422–3745
E-mail: curric.contact@education.gov.ab.ca

Distributed Learning
Telephone: 780–674–5350
Fax: 780–674–6561
E-mail: DLB.General@gov.ab.ca

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Services
Telephone: 780–415–9300
Fax: 780–415–9306
E-mail: FNMIServices@gov.ab.ca

French Language Education Services
Telephone: 780–427–2940
Fax: 780–422–1947
E-mail: LSB@edc.gov.ab.ca

Learner Assessment
Telephone: 780–427–0010
Fax: 780–422–4200
E-mail: LAcontact@edc.gov.ab.ca

Mathematics and Science
Telephone: 780–427–2984
Fax: 780–422–3745
E-mail: curric.contact@education.gov.ab.ca

Special Education Branch
Telephone: 780–422–6326
Fax: 780–422–2039
E-mail: Special.Education@gov.ab.ca

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Message from the
Minister of Education

As we look forward with excitement to the possibilities and opportunities of another school year, it is important to take some time to review what our students will be learning, and to make sure that all of us are prepared to ensure every child can find their passion and fulfill their potential.

Through our community engagement initiatives, such as *Inspiring Education* and *Speak Out,* I have spoken with thousands of Albertans in our communities about education, its role in our lives and what we want it to do for children and youth, now and in the future.

It's quite clear that Albertans value their education system and understand that it is the foundation for the future economic prosperity of our province. However, we must continue to build on our tradition of excellence. To do that, we need a new approach to education. We need transformative change.

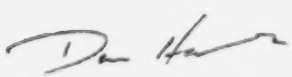
Just as you are looking at what your child will be learning over the next year, we are examining how we teach our children and what they will learn. Now, more than ever, we are able to take a big-picture, long-term view of what education needs to be. We are looking at how we can improve learning outcomes rather than simply using the same curricula in a different way. We are transforming our education system to embrace optimism, passion, talent, curiosity, creativity and intelligence.

Parents play an integral role as agents of change in their children's education by providing them with the encouragement and support they need to succeed academically. It is clear that students benefit when parents are actively engaged in their children's learning because together, both have a solid understanding of the tasks, challenges and rewards offered through our programs of study.

I hope you will also look at the many other learning opportunities that are available for your child outside of their schooling. Libraries, community and recreation centres, service organizations and mentors all enrich young peoples' learning and build on the lessons they learn at school.

This curriculum overview is a valuable resource that will answer many questions you may have about what your child is learning. I also hope this publication will create an opportunity for open dialogue between you, your child and his or her teacher regarding curriculum outcomes and expectations.

I encourage you to take the time to read through this resource. I wish you and your child every success this school year.



Dave Hancock, Q.C.
Minister, Alberta Education

Introduction

Web site links for further information are provided throughout the handbook.

Students learn in a variety of environments—in their homes, schools and communities. Parents, teachers and community members form a partnership to assist this learning.

When parents know what children are studying at school, they can provide better home support for their children's learning. The *Curriculum Handbooks for Parents* are designed to assist parents in participating in their child's education by fostering an understanding of what students learn at each grade level.

Finding Information

Parents can find information about the curriculum and learning resources in a number of ways:

- Contact teachers or school administrators.

http://education.alberta.ca/parents/resources/handbook.aspx

- **Curriculum Handbooks** contain selected outcomes for each subject area from the Alberta programs of study. They provide a more detailed picture of each year. This Curriculum Handbook is one of a set from Kindergarten to senior high school produced in general and Catholic versions and in French. They are available on the Alberta Education Web site or for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC).

http://education.alberta.ca/parents/resources/summaries.aspx

- **Curriculum Summaries** for each grade level provide a brief overview of each year. The summaries are available on the Alberta Education Web site.

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program.aspx

- In Alberta, the provincial curriculum is organized into **Programs of Study**. They contain learning outcomes for each subject area from Kindergarten to Grade 12. They are legal documents that outline why the educational program is offered, what students are expected to learn and the basic principles about how students are to achieve the required knowledge, skills and attitudes. School authorities use the **Programs of Study** to ensure that students meet provincial standards of achievement. However, they have flexibility to decide how to teach the curriculum and the order in which it is taught. They are available on the Alberta Education Web site or for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC).

http://education.alberta.ca/apps/lrdb

- The Authorized Resources Database on the Alberta Education Web site lists **Alberta authorized student and teacher resources**, most of which are available for purchase from the LRC.

http://education.alberta.ca

- The **Alberta Education Web site** contains information on learning from the early years to adulthood.

Helping Your Child at Home

Here are some important pointers for you to help your child learn.

- Be positive and encouraging in your approach to learning. It will help your child feel confident and enthusiastic about success.
- Talk to your child about schoolwork and help with homework when you can.
- Help your child set realistic goals and discuss progress in an encouraging way.
- Connect your child's schoolwork with everyday life and use these opportunities for problem solving in everyday situations.
- Keep in touch with teachers about your child's progress, including successes and achievements, not just concerns.

The following resources may help you. Check your child's school for availability.

This resource is available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC). Order online at http://lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.html

- *Make School Work for You: A Resource for Junior and Senior High Students Who Want to Be More Successful Learners*— Information on knowing yourself, getting organized, making every class count, test taking, presenting learning, getting along with others and staying motivated.

- *The Parent Advantage: Helping Children Become More Successful Learners at Home and School, Grades 1–9*— Strategies parents can use to help their child improve organizational, reading, writing, spelling, mathematical, test taking and project skills at the grades 1–9 levels.

http://learnalberta.ca

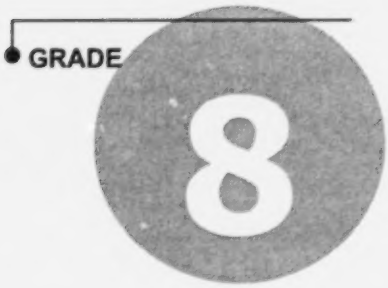
- *LearnAlberta.ca* Web site—Online multimedia learning resources that directly relate to the Alberta programs of study.

http://www.2learn.ca

- *TELUS 2Learn* Web site—An education/business partnership that provides Internet in-service, support and information for Alberta teachers, students and parents.

Information Regarding the *Alberta Human Rights Act*

On September 1, 2010, section 11.1 of the *Alberta Human Rights Act* comes into force. This section requires boards (including charter schools) to provide parents with notice where "courses of study, educational programs or instructional materials, or instruction or exercises … include subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion, human sexuality or sexual orientation." Where a parent makes a written request, teachers shall exempt the student, without academic penalty, from such instruction, course of study, educational program or use of instructional material. These requirements do not apply to incidental or indirect references to religion, religious themes, human sexuality or sexual orientation. For more information, refer to the *Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12*.



In Grade 8, students study required subject areas. They also choose optional courses that give them the chance to explore areas of interest and career possibilities. Students have access to a minimum of 950 hours of instruction each school year.

Overview

The Grade 8 Alberta program of studies for each subject area sets out general outcomes or topics that provide an overview of the important learnings students accomplish. Specific outcomes are included for each general outcome or topic and state in detail the knowledge, skills and attitudes students are working toward achieving.

View the programs of study at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program.aspx

This handbook contains:

- the general outcomes or topics for each subject area
- selected specific outcomes for most subject areas.

Purchase programs of study from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC). Order online at http://lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.html

The programs of study, which include all the general and specific outcomes, are available on the Alberta Education Web site or for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC).

GRADE 8: [REQUIRED SUBJECT AREAS]

- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Physical Education
- Health and Life Skills

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is infused throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

GRADE 8: [OPTIONAL SUBJECT AREAS]

- Career and Technology Studies
- Fine and Performing Arts
- Languages*
- Environmental and Outdoor Education
- Ethics
- Locally Developed Courses

* Students in French immersion programs and bilingual programs in other languages take English language arts as well as language arts in the target language.

New Courses for 2010–2011 School Year:

- International Languages
  - Chinese Language and Culture (Nine-year Program)
  - Spanish Language and Culture (Nine-year Program)

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

View the information and communication technology subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/ict.aspx

ICT is learned most effectively in the context of subject areas, therefore, the ICT curriculum is best infused within the teaching of other programs of study such as language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Through ICT, students learn how to use and apply a variety of information and communication technologies; the nature of technology and the importance of technology in daily life.

ICT learning outcomes have been established for each division. The following is a sample of the Division 3 learning outcomes that students are expected to meet by the end of Grade 9.

Communicating, Inquiring, Decision Making and Problem Solving

- evaluate the authority and reliability of electronic sources
- develop a process to manage volumes of information that can be made available through electronic sources

Foundational Operations, Knowledge and Concepts

- explain the issues involved in balancing the right to access information with the right to personal privacy
- recognize that the ability of technology to manipulate images and sound can alter the meaning of a communication

Processes for Productivity

- use advanced word processing menu features to accomplish a task; for example, insert a table, graph or text from another document
- demonstrate proficient use of various information retrieval technologies

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/fnmi.aspx

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/fnmi/policies.aspx

First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples throughout the province have indicated they want their children to complete regular school requirements and achieve the same standards as set for all students in Alberta. Alberta Education shares this goal with parents. The First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Education Policy Framework (2002) provides further information.

To support the learning of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, schools are encouraged to use learning resources that include First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives. All students in Alberta need to understand and be aware of First Nations, Métis and Inuit history, culture, lifestyles and heritage. First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) perspectives are infused into the existing Kindergarten to Grade 12 programs of study. Student and teacher resources have been developed by Alberta Education to support the inclusion of FNMI content in teaching and learning.

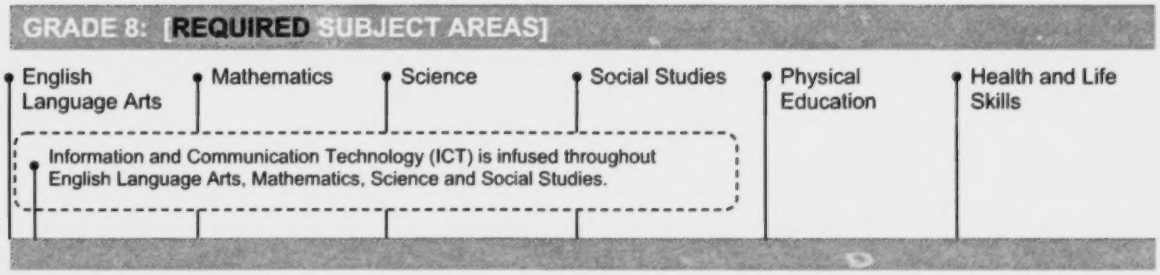
Both provincially and locally authorized Blackfoot and Cree language and culture courses are offered in the province.

English Language Learners

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/esl.aspx

Many children born in Canada have a first language other than English and many students move here from countries where English is not the primary language. These English language learners require English as a second language (ESL) programming and supports to achieve grade level expectations in all subject areas.

The **required subject areas** are the foundation of the elementary program.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Science
Social Studies
Physical Education
Health and Life Skills
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English Language Arts

View the English language arts subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/english.aspx

View the English language arts digital resources on the LearnAlberta.ca Web site at http://learnalberta.ca

There are two basic aims of English language arts. One aim is to encourage, in students, an understanding and appreciation of the significance and artistry of literature. A second aim is to enable each student to understand and appreciate language and to use it confidently and competently for a variety of purposes, with diverse audiences and in a range of situations for communication, personal satisfaction and learning.

From Kindergarten to Grade 12, students are developing knowledge, skills and attitudes in six language arts: Listening and Speaking; Reading and Writing; Viewing and Representing. Students learn to compose, comprehend and respond to oral, print and other media texts. They experience a variety of texts from many cultural traditions.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 8 English Language Arts Program of Studies.

Explore thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences

- seek out and consider diverse ideas, opinions and experiences to develop and extend own ideas, opinions and experiences
- examine and reflect on own growth in effective use of language to revise and extend personal goals
- acknowledge the value of the ideas and opinions of others in exploring and extending personal interpretations and perspectives
- exchange ideas and opinions to clarify understanding and to broaden personal perspectives

Comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts

- use knowledge of authors, forms and genres, developed during previous reading, to direct and extend reading experiences
- take notes, make outlines and use such strategies as read, recite, review to comprehend and remember ideas and information
- choose and use strategies for word identification, vocabulary development and spelling that either build on specific strengths or address areas for improvement
- discuss various ways characters are developed and the reasons for and plausibility of character change
- compare and contrast the different perspectives provided by first and third person narration
- choose forms or genres of oral, print or other media texts for the particular affects they will have on audiences and purposes

Manage ideas and information

- identify and trace the development of arguments, opinions or points of view in oral, print and other media texts
- select the most appropriate information sources for topic, audience, purpose and form
- record key ideas and information from oral, print and other media texts, avoiding overuse of direct quotations
- make notes in point form, summarizing major ideas and supporting details; reference sources
- communicate ideas and information in a variety of oral, print and other media texts, such as interviews, minilessons and documentaries
- assess the research process, and consider alternative ways of achieving research goals

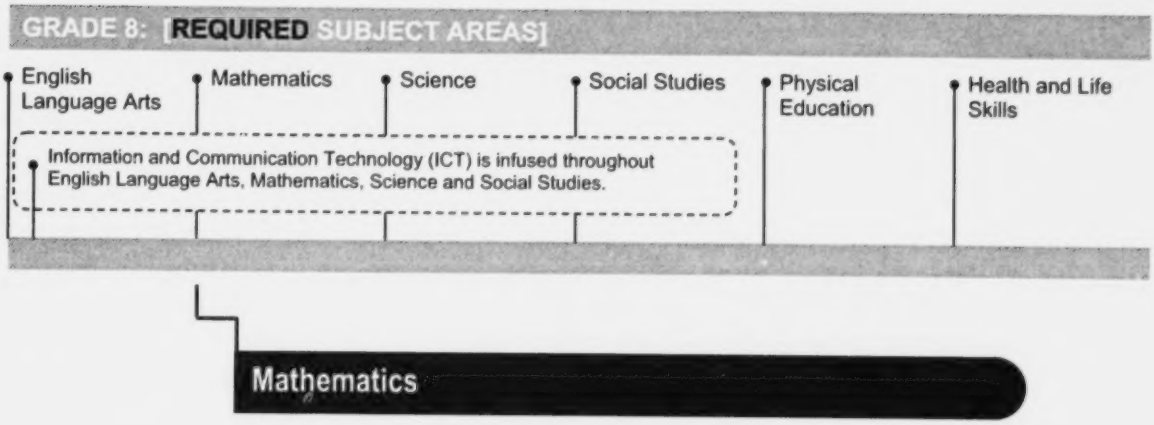
Enhance the clarity and artistry of communication

- revise by adding words and phrases that emphasize important ideas or create dominant impressions
- vary handwriting style and pace, depending on the context, audience and purpose
- choose an effective format for documents, depending on the content, audience and purpose
- use verb tenses consistently throughout a piece of writing

- use knowledge of spelling generalizations and how words are formed to spell technical terms and unfamiliar words in own writing
- plan and facilitate small group and short, whole class presentations to share information
- present information to achieve a particular purpose and to appeal to interest and background knowledge of reader or audience
- anticipate the organizational pattern of presentations, and identify important ideas and supporting details

Respect, support and collaborate with others

- compare ways in which oral, print and other media texts reflect specific elements of cultures or periods in history
- use inclusive language and actions that demonstrate respect for people of different races, cultures, genders, ages and abilities
- use opportunities as a group member to contribute to group goals and extend own learning
- organize and complete tasks cooperatively by defining roles and responsibilities, negotiating to find the basis for agreement, setting objectives and time frames, and reviewing progress
- evaluate the quality of own contributions to group process, and offer constructive feedback to others; propose suggestions for improvement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Mathematics

View the mathematics subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/math.aspx

View mathematics digital resources on the LearnAlberta.ca Web site at http://learnalberta.ca

The main goals of mathematics education are to prepare students to:

- use mathematics confidently to solve problems
- communicate and reason mathematically
- appreciate and value mathematics
- make connections between mathematics and its applications
- commit themselves to lifelong learning
- become mathematically literate adults, using mathematics to contribute to society.

Students who have met these goals will:

- gain understanding and appreciation of the contributions of mathematics as a science, philosophy and art
- exhibit a positive attitude toward mathematics
- engage and persevere in mathematical tasks and projects
- contribute to mathematical discussions
- take risks in performing mathematical tasks
- exhibit curiosity.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 8 Mathematics Program of Studies.

Number

- demonstrate an understanding of perfect squares and square roots, concretely, pictorially and symbolically (limited to whole numbers)
- demonstrate an understanding of ratio and rate

- demonstrate an understanding of multiplying and dividing positive fractions and mixed numbers, concretely, pictorially and symbolically
- demonstrate an understanding of multiplication and division of integers, concretely, pictorially and symbolically

Patterns and Relations

- graph and analyze two-variable linear relations
- model and solve problems concretely, pictorially and symbolically, using linear equations of the form:
  - $ax = b$
  - $\frac{x}{a} = b, a \neq 0$
  - $ax + b = c$
  - $\frac{x}{a} + b = c, a \neq 0$
  - $a(x + b) = c$

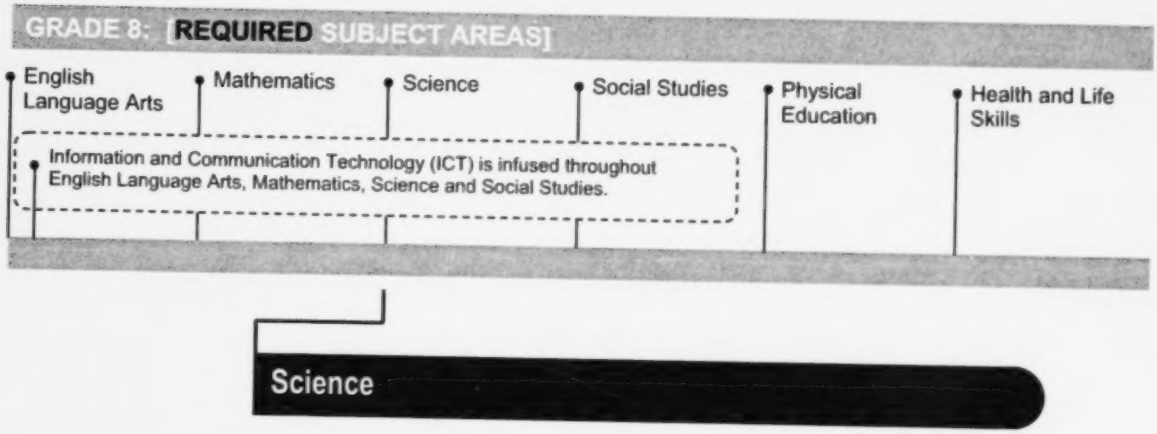
  where a, b and c are integers

Shape and Space

- develop and apply the Pythagorean theorem to solve problems
- develop and apply formulas for determining the volume of right rectangular prisms, right triangular prisms and right cylinders
- draw and interpret top, front and side views of 3-D objects composed of right rectangular prisms
- demonstrate an understanding of the congruence of polygons

Statistics and Probability

- critique ways in which data is presented in circle graphs, line graphs, bar graphs and pictographs
- solve problems involving the probability of independent events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Science

View the science subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/science.aspx

View science digital resources on the LearnAlberta.ca Web site at http://learnalberta.ca

The secondary science program is guided by the vision that all students have the opportunity to develop scientific literacy. The goal of scientific literacy is to develop the science-related knowledge, skills and attitudes that students need to solve problems and make decisions, and at the same time help them become lifelong learners—maintaining their sense of wonder about the world around them.

The program is designed to help students understand the nature and role of science, as well as develop a solid grounding in science knowledge, skills and attitudes. Throughout the program, students learn that:

- science provides an ordered way of studying the natural world
- scientific discovery often leads to the development of new technologies and new technologies can lead to new fields of scientific investigation
- science takes place in a social context and responds to human needs. Science and technology have both intended and unintended consequences for humans and the environment.

Students study five units during their Grade 8 year. The topics studied and the major outcomes for each are:

Mix and Flow of Matter

- describe fluids used in technological devices and everyday materials
- describe the composition of fluids, and interpret the behaviour of materials in solution
- investigate and compare the properties of gases and liquids
- identify technologies based on properties of fluids

Cells and Systems

- investigate living things and their general structure, function and organization
- investigate and describe the role of cells within living things
- interpret the healthy function of human body systems, and illustrate ways the body reacts to stimuli
- describe areas of scientific investigation leading to new knowledge about body systems and to new medical applications

Light and Optical Systems

- investigate the nature of light and vision
- investigate the transmission of light, and describe its behaviour
- investigate and explain the science of image formation and vision

Mechanical Systems

- describe and compare mechanical devices that have been improved over time
- analyze machines by describing the overall system, the subsystems and the component parts
- describe the transmission of force and energy between parts of a mechanical system
- analyze the social and environmental contexts of science and technology, as they apply to the development of mechanical devices

Freshwater and Saltwater Systems

- describe the distribution and characteristics of water in local and global environments, and identify the significance of water supply and quality to the needs of humans and other living things
- investigate and interpret linkages among landforms, water and climate
- analyze factors affecting productivity and species distribution in marine and freshwater environments
- analyze human impacts on aquatic systems

The program develops **skills** in four major areas:

Initiating and Planning
Students devise (or make) plans to investigate:

- science-inquiry questions
- practical problems
- science-related issues.

Performing and Recording
Students conduct investigations through:

- observation
- recording data
- researching information.

Analyzing and Interpreting
Students develop, analyze and assess possible explanations through:

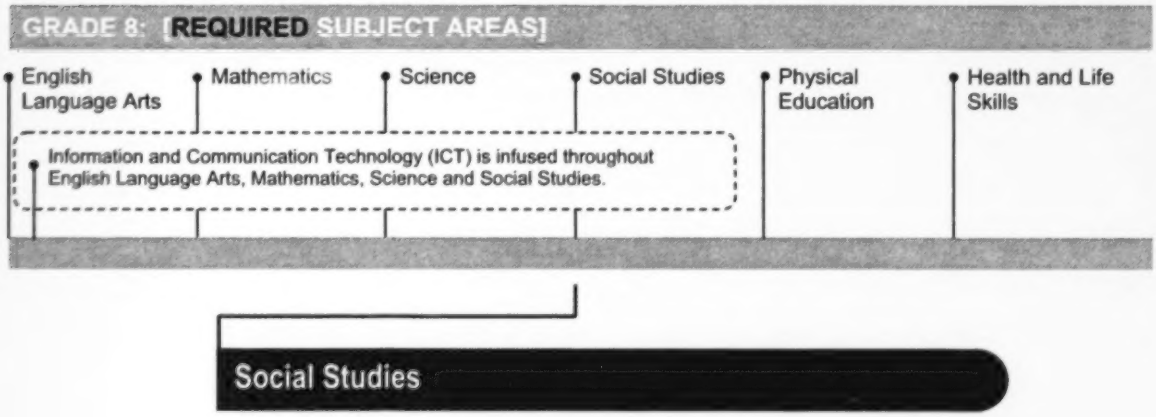
- data display
- inference
- evaluation.

Communication and Teamwork
Students work collaboratively to:

- communicate questions, ideas, procedures and results
- evaluate individual and group processes
- defend a position or conclusion, based on their findings.

To support their learning, students are encouraged to develop positive **attitudes** in the following six areas:

- continuing interest in science
- respect for the ideas of people with various backgrounds and views
- support for scientific processes
- collaboration with others
- stewardship for the natural environment
- safety in science.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Social Studies

View the social studies subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/socialstudies.aspx

The aim of the social studies program is to promote a sense of belonging and acceptance in students as they engage in active and responsible citizenship. At the heart of Alberta's social studies program are the concepts of citizenship and identity in the Canadian context. It also includes multiple perspectives, including Aboriginal and Francophone, that contribute to Canada's identity. The program also has a strong focus on Canadian and Alberta history.

Grade 8 students will learn how intercultural contact between societies leads to significant change and alters each society's worldview.

Grade 8 students will examine issues related to contact between societies with differing worldviews. They will explore elements of worldviews and how these views are expressed by people living in different times and in different places. Through this inquiry, students will reflect on their own worldviews and assess the influence that the past has had on the present. Examples will be drawn from Japan, Renaissance Europe and Spanish and Aztec societies.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 8 Social Studies Program of Studies.

From Isolation to Adaptation: Japan

Through an examination of Japan, students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the ways in which beliefs, values and knowledge shape worldviews and contribute to a society's isolation or adaptation.

Values and Attitudes

- appreciate the roles of time and geographic location in shaping a society's worldview
- appreciate how a society's worldview shapes individual citizenship and identity

Knowledge and Understanding

Students will analyze the effects of cultural isolation during the Edo period by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- How did the changes resulting from isolation affect Japan economically, politically and socially during the Edo period?

Students will analyze the effects that rapid adaptation had on traditionally isolated Japan during the Meiji period by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- How did Japan adapt to changes brought on by the transition from feudal to modern models of organization?
- In what ways did the changes resulting from isolation in the Edo period compare to changes resulting from adaptation in the Meiji period?

Origins of a Western Worldview: Renaissance Europe

Through an examination of Renaissance Europe, students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of how the exchange of ideas and knowledge contributed to shaping the worldview of the Western world.

Values and Attitudes

- appreciate how Renaissance Europe formed the basis for the worldview of the Western world
- recognize how beliefs and values are shaped by time, geographic location and societal context

Knowledge and Understanding

Students will examine, critically, the factors that shaped the worldview evolving in western Europe during the Renaissance by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- How did the Renaissance spark the growth and exchange of ideas and knowledge across Europe (i.e., astronomy, mathematics, science, politics, religion, arts)?

Worldviews in Conflict: The Spanish and the Aztecs

Through an examination of Spanish and Aztec societies, students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of how intercultural contact affects the worldviews of societies.

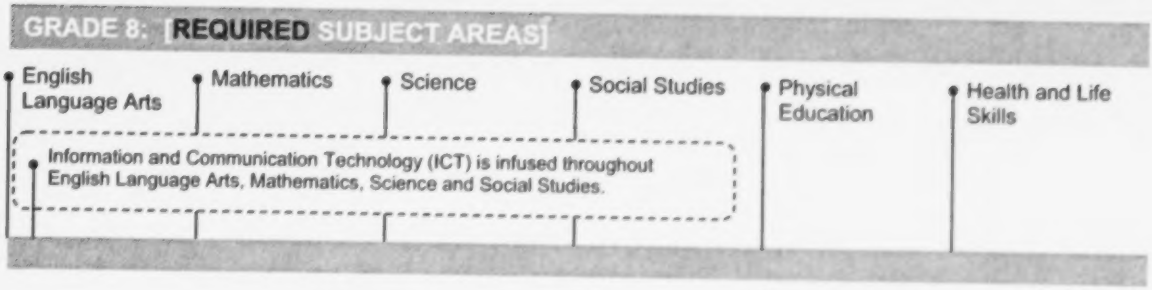
Values and Attitudes

- appreciate how a society's worldview influences the society's choices, decisions and interactions with other societies

Knowledge and Understanding

Students will assess, critically, how the Aztecs were affected by the Spanish worldview by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- What were the key elements of the worldview of the Aztec civilization prior to contact with the Spanish?
- In what ways did factors such as technology and disease contribute to the dominance of the Spanish over the Aztec civilization?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Physical Education

View the physical education subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/pe.aspx

The aim of the K–12 physical education program is to enable individuals to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to lead an active, healthy lifestyle. Students participate in a variety of physical activities: dance, games, types of gymnastics, individual activities and activities in alternative environments, such as aquatics and outdoor pursuits. All learning outcomes are to be met through physical activity as a means of fostering a desire in students to participate in lifelong physical activity.

General Outcome A: Activity

Students will acquire skills through a variety of developmentally appropriate movement activities; dance, games, types of gymnastics, individual activities and activities in an alternative environment; e.g., aquatics and outdoor pursuits.

- Basic Skills; Locomotor; Nonlocomotor; Manipulative
- Application of Basic Skills in an Alternative Environment, Dance, Games, Types of Gymnastics, Individual Activities

General outcomes B, C and D are interrelated and interdependent and are achieved through involvement in movement activities identified in General Outcome A.

General Outcome B: Benefits Health

Students will understand, experience and appreciate the health benefits that result from physical activity.

- Functional Fitness
- Body Image
- Well-being

General Outcome C: Cooperation

Students will interact positively with others.

- Communication
- Fair Play
- Leadership
- Teamwork

General Outcome D: Do it Daily ... for Life!

Students will assume responsibility to lead an active way of life.

- Effort
- Safety
- Goal Setting/Personal Challenge
- Active Living in the Community

Exemptions from Physical Education

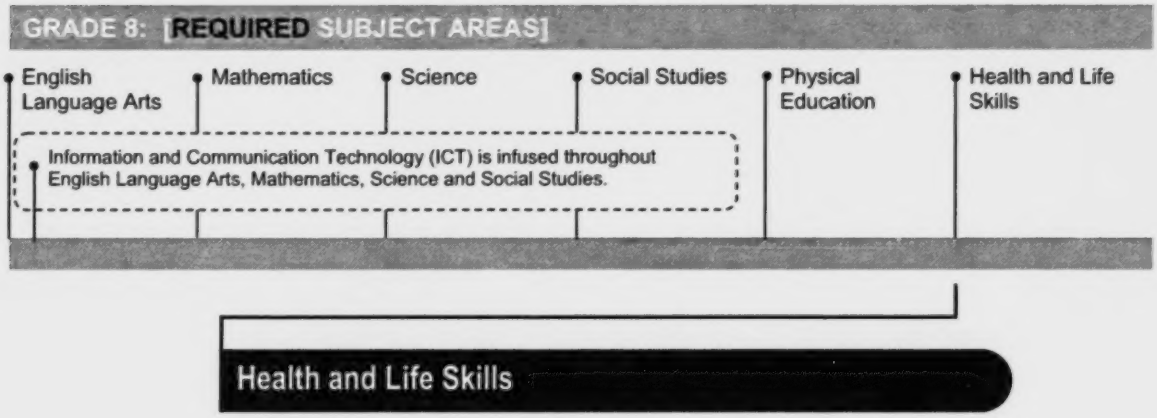
Exemptions from participation in physical education may be given for medical conditions, when accompanied by a medical certificate from a doctor to the principal; for religious beliefs, when accompanied by a statement in writing from the parent to the principal; and where access to facilities is prohibitive. When exemption is granted, activities consistent with the program outcomes should be substituted, where appropriate.

Physical Education Online

http://education.alberta.ca/physicaleducationonline

The Physical Education Online Web site provides a wealth of information to support student learning of the K–12 physical education program of studies. The site is organized into three major sections:

- Program of Studies—The general outcomes and grade specific outcomes for K–12.
- Teacher Resources—Links to authorized resources, the Guide to Implementation, teaching tools, and activities and lessons that address the outcomes for the K–12 physical education program.
- Home Education—This portion is designed for parents and teachers to use with students who may be enrolled in an online or home education physical education course.


GRADE 8: [REQUIRED SUBJECT AREAS]
English Language Arts
Mathematics
Science
Social Studies
Physical Education
Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is infused throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.
Health and Life Skills

View the health and life skills subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/health.aspx

The aim of the health and life skills program is to enable students to make well-informed, healthy choices and to develop behaviours that contribute to the well-being of self and others. A comprehensive health program involves a partnership among home, school and community.

Wellness Choices

Students will make responsible and informed choices to maintain health and promote safety for self and others.

- Personal health
- Safety and responsibility

Relationship Choices

Students will develop effective interpersonal skills that demonstrate responsibility, respect and caring in order to establish and maintain healthy interactions.

- Understanding and expressing feelings
- Interactions
- Group roles and processes

Life Learning Choices

Students will use resources effectively to manage and explore life roles and career opportunities and challenges.

- Learning strategies
- Life roles and career development
- Volunteerism

Human Sexuality Education

Schools are required to offer human sexuality education in Grade 4 to Grade 9. Parents have the right to exempt their child from this instruction. Schools will provide alternative learning experiences for those students who have been exempted from human sexuality instruction.

In addition to required subject areas, junior high schools must offer a minimum of two provincially authorized optional courses. Optional courses are designed to reinforce learnings in core courses and to provide opportunities for students to explore areas of interest and career possibilities.

The range of optional subject areas offered by elementary schools varies from school to school depending on such factors as student and parent preferences, facilities and staffing.

GRADE 8: [OPTIONAL SUBJECT AREAS]

- Career and Technology Studies
- Fine and Performing Arts
- Languages
- Environmental and Outdoor Education
- Ethics
- Locally Developed Courses

Career and Technology Studies

View the career and technology studies subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/cts.aspx

View CTS digital resources on the LearnAlberta.ca Web site at http://learnalberta.ca/

Career and Technology Studies (CTS) is designed to develop skills that senior high school students can apply in their daily lives when preparing for entry into the workplace or for further learning opportunities.

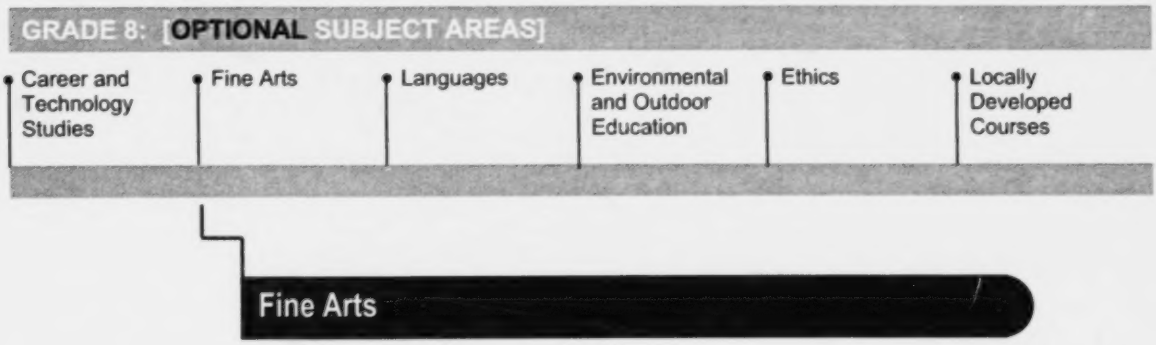
CTS is organized into five clusters:

- Business, Administration, Finance & Information Technology (BIT)
- Health, Recreation & Human Services (HRH)
- Media, Design & Communication Arts (MDC)
- Natural Resources (NAT)
- Trades, Manufacturing & Transportation (TMT).

A cluster is a group of CTS courses that represent occupations and broad industry commonalities. Clusters in CTS are aligned with the National Occupational Classification (NOC) system and function as an organizing tool for the CTS program.

The Business, Administration, Finance & Information Technology (BIT) and Trades, Manufacturing & Transportation (TMT) clusters were implemented in September 2009. The Health, Recreation & Human Services (HRH); Media, Design and Communication Arts (MDC); and Natural Resources (NAT) clusters will be implemented in September 2010.

Introductory level courses in CTS clusters, including Business, Administration, Finance & Information Technology (BIT); Trades, Manufacturing & Transportation (TMT); Health, Recreation & Human Services (HRH); Media, Design and Communication Arts (MDC); and Natural Resources (NAT) clusters are considered appropriate for junior high school students.



View the fine arts subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/finearts.aspx

Through the Fine and Performing Arts courses of Art, Drama and Music, students develop self-awareness and express their creativity in many ways. They will respond personally and critically to a variety of art, drama and music styles and forms.

Art

Students learn how to use traditional and contemporary tools, materials and media to express their feelings, think like artists, value the art creation and value the art form. Three areas form the framework of the junior high school art program:

- Drawings—recording, investigating, communicating, evaluating and articulating aspects of making images
- Compositions—organizations, components and relationships involved in the creation of images
- Encounters—looking at images and artifacts, finding ideas for making art, learning about the art of other times, changing imagery, and learning to understand and appreciate the purposes and effects of art

Drama

Drama encourages students to explore a variety of dramatic roles and develop a range of dramatic skills. In the junior high school drama program, students learn about drama and theatre through:

- Movement—physical, nonverbal expression
- Speech—exploration of talking and speaking to communicate ideas effectively
- Improvisation/Acting—acting out an idea or situation

- Theatre Studies—an introduction to the elements of drama and theatre
- Technical Theatre—stage construction and the use of sound, lighting, makeup, costumes, sets and props.

Music

Instrumental music, choral music and general music are the three distinctive, yet related, programs in the junior high school music curriculum. Development in any of these programs requires student involvement as a performer, listener and composer. Five main goals of the junior high school music program are to:

- develop skills in listening to, performing and reading music
- strive for musical excellence
- understand, evaluate and appreciate a variety of music styles
- develop self-expression, creativity and communication through music
- increase awareness of the history of music and the role of music in own lives.

GRADE 8: **OPTIONAL** SUBJECT AREAS]

- Career and Technology Studies
- Fine and Performing Arts
- Languages
- Environmental and Outdoor Education
- Ethics
- Locally Developed Courses

Languages

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/resources/learnlang/educators/toolkit.aspx

A variety of courses in languages are available throughout Alberta. These courses include First Nations, Métis and Inuit languages, French and International languages.

Alberta school authorities implement language programs, either:
- by choosing from available provincial programs or
- through a locally-developed course series.

FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT LANGUAGES

Blackfoot and Cree Language and Culture

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/fnmi.aspx

Blackfoot and Cree language and culture programs are designed to enable students to learn their respective languages and to increase awareness of their cultures.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Blackfoot and Cree Language and Culture Programs of Study.

Blackfoot

- acquire basic communication skills in the Blackfoot language
- develop cultural sensitivity, and enhance personal development
- develop a desire to extend or improve proficiency in the Blackfoot language

Cree

- use Cree in a variety of community and school situations and for a variety of purposes
- be effective, competent and comfortable as Cree speakers (*Okiskinamawâkanak ka nihtâ nehiyawewak*)

- live *(wa)wētina(hk)* (peacefully) with Mother Earth, others and themselves, guided by *Ômâmawi Ohtâwîmâw* (the Creator)
- know and use various strategies to maximize the effectiveness of learning and communication

FRENCH

French Immersion Program

http://education.alberta.ca/parents/educationsys/frenchlanguage/immersion.aspx

In Alberta, many students have the opportunity to study in a French immersion program. This program, designed for non-French speaking students, offers an effective way for students to become functionally fluent in French while achieving all of the learning outcomes of the regular programs of study. Graduates from French immersion programs achieve a level of fluency in the target language that allows them to pursue their post-secondary studies in French or to accept employment in a workplace where French is the main language of communication.

There are many delivery models for French immersion present in Alberta schools.

- Early immersion—students begin their immersion experience in Kindergarten and continue in the program to Grade 12.
- Late immersion—the entry point is typically Grade 7.

Courses offered in the French language have as their basis a French version of the English language programs of study, which is identical or comparable to the one used in the English language programs. However, a program of studies specific to French immersion students was developed for the learning/teaching of French language arts. Some of the main French language arts learning outcomes are presented in the following section, French Language Arts.

A resource that may be helpful to parents is *Yes, You Can Help! Information and Inspiration for French Immersion Parents*. It is available for purchase from the LRC.

French Language Arts

http://education.alberta.ca/francais/teachers/progres/core/fla.aspx

At the junior high school level, the French language arts program of studies is intended to continue work started at the elementary level, including vocabulary and sentence structure enrichment, to enable students to engage more actively and effectively in proposed activities. Students become aware of elements that ensure message clarity, such as exact, precise expressions and words, and correct, increasingly complex sentences. They learn to respect the basic rules of language in the oral exchanges that take place in the classroom as well as in their writing projects.

The acquisition of a solid language basis allows students to better understand, clarify and express abstract thoughts. The program of studies also targets the development of the students' ability to plan and monitor their communication projects, whether they are working individually, with classroom partners, or participating in activities organized by the Francophone community. Students become more aware of factors that influence the way they communicate effectively in various contexts.

In **oral comprehension**, students learn to pay particular attention to the organization of a message (text structure and genre) and to their knowledge about the author, producer or broadcast to guide them in their listening. They learn to question their attitudes toward the task and the means they use to overcome difficulties.

In **reading comprehension**, students develop their reading ability by analyzing the task at hand and choosing the best way to tackle more complex passages. They improve their ability to analyze text characteristics for better understanding of internal organization (text structure and genre) and the author's intent.

In **oral production**, students learn the vocabulary and sentence structure that will enable them to express themselves in various contexts. They develop the ability to plan group projects and to interact effectively with their peers.

In **writing**, students gradually learn to develop a work plan that will enable them to complete their writing project more efficiently. They learn to organize and express their ideas clearly, while still respecting the rules of internal text organization and spelling. They also learn to edit their texts using various reference works.

Note: The development of basic language skills does not take place in isolated exercises, but rather in context, so that students learn not only the rules but also when and how to apply them.

In Grade 8, learning occurs primarily:

In **oral comprehension** through:

- group work situations
- listening to texts from various subject areas
- listening to newspaper and magazine articles, short stories or excerpts from plays or novels
- listening to audiotapes, such as songs or documentaries
- viewing audiovisual materials.

Students learn to examine the factors influencing the listening situation and become aware of their attitude toward the tasks.

In **reading comprehension**:

Teachers will select

- descriptive texts
- information and opinion texts
- texts from the imaginary world; e.g., cartoons, poetry and song.

To develop reading strategies, students learn to tackle texts taking into account their organization (e.g., descriptive) and develop various ways of annotating texts.

In **oral production**:

The proposed situations should allow students to demonstrate what they already know, what they have learned about a given subject, or to express their opinions based on examples from their readings and discussions. The topics chosen for the presentations may be from another area of study. Students should have had the opportunity to explore topic-related vocabulary in various contexts.

The presentations and discussions should be well structured, with emphasis on:

- the use of expressions or words to describe events and their experiences
- the following sequence: *subject noun (or subject pronoun) + complement pronoun – verb*
- the present subjunctive.

Emphasis on *discussion* enables students to continue developing their ability to interact with peers. Students are required to agree on the operational rules of the group as well as on their roles and responsibilities with respect to the task.

In **writing**:

Students learn to write texts in which they pay particular attention to the structure and organization of information. They also learn to write short stories in which they establish links between the feelings of characters and their actions.

The main purpose of these learning activities is to enable students to integrate the basic elements of the written language:

- the selection of a text structure consistent with their communicative intent

- the organization of ideas according to a plan—introduction, development and conclusion
- the recognition and correction of syntactic Anglicisms
- the use of present subjunctive
- the verb agreement when the subject and verb is followed by a "screen" (words in apposition) or when the subject is *qui*
- the agreement of subject and verb in the present conditional and simple future
- the position of the direct or indirect personal pronouns in declarative and interrogatory statements in simple tenses
- punctuation
- spelling.

French as a Second Language

http://education.alberta.ca/français/teachers/progres/compl/fsl.aspx

In Alberta, the French as a Second Language (FSL) Nine-year Program is a course sequence in which the French language is taught as a subject. The goal of the course is to develop students' communication skills in French and acquire an appreciation and understanding of Francophone cultures in Alberta, Canada and the world.

Grade 8 is designed so that students integrate the knowledge and skills they acquired in grades 4 to 7, while expanding their language use so they can:

- understand and communicate orally and in writing the main ideas and some isolated details in oral and written texts dealing with familiar topics, such as choice of pet and pet care, animal adoption, clothing design and choices, clothing care, nutrition, food preparation, ethnic cuisine, food and celebrations
- gain language knowledge and more sophisticated language structures to understand and communicate messages
- recognize and understand how the French language has evolved and continues to evolve
- recognize and appreciate regional differences in the French language
- demonstrate knowledge of language conventions that are culturally appropriate, such as the abbreviations and symbols for measurement, currency symbols and spacing of numbers and certain punctuation marks
- continue to develop and use language learning strategies so as to become more effective and efficient learners of French.

INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGES

Bilingual Programs

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/interlang.aspx

Students in a bilingual program follow a language arts course in the target language (e.g., Spanish, Ukrainian) in addition to studying English language arts. In these programs, the target language is also used as the language of instruction in other subject areas, such as mathematics, science and social studies.

Students acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and representing. They learn to use the target language confidently and competently in a variety of situations for communication, personal satisfaction and further learning. They are able to explore, understand and appreciate the cultures of the target language for personal growth and satisfaction, and to participate in and contribute to an interdependent and multicultural global society.

Alberta Education offers the following provincial courses for bilingual program students:

- Chinese (Mandarin) Language Arts
- German Language Arts
- Spanish Language Arts
- Ukrainian Language Arts

Language and Culture Programs

Students in a language and culture course study the target language (e.g., Ukrainian, German) as a subject area. Language and culture programs are designed to develop language and cultural skills.

Alberta Education offers provincially developed language and culture programs of study for Grade 7 students. At the junior high level in international languages, there are courses that may be taught that are extensions of courses that have begun at earlier entry points (Grade 1). Currently, the Italian Language and Culture (Twelve Year Program) is the only provincial course sequence that begins at Grade 1 and extends through junior high to Grade 12.

The following language and culture courses are available to students who began their study of a target language in Grade 4:

- Chinese Language and Culture (Nine-year Program)
- German Language and Culture (Nine-year Program)
- Japanese Language and Culture (Nine-year Program)
- Punjabi Language and Culture (Nine-year Program)
- Spanish Language and Culture (Nine-year Program)
- Ukrainian Language and Culture (Nine-year Program)

The following language and culture courses are available to students who begin their study of a target language in Grade 7:

- Chinese Language and Culture (Six-year Program)
- German Language and Culture (Six-year Program)
- Italian Language and Culture (Six-year Program)
- Japanese Language and Culture (Six-year Program)
- Spanish Language and Culture (Six-year Program)
- Ukrainian Language and Culture (Six-year Program)

LOCALLY DEVELOPED LANGUAGE COURSES

If there are no available provincial programs of study, school authorities may develop their own language course series. Currently, a variety of languages, e.g., Arabic, American Sign Language (ASL), Hebrew, Polish and Russian, are offered as local courses. Locally developed First Nations, Métis and Inuit language and culture courses may also be available to meet the needs of students in local or First Nations schools.

For more information on second language instruction offered in your area, please contact your local school board.

GRADE 8: **OPTIONAL** SUBJECT AREAS]

- Career and Technology Studies
- Fine and Performing Arts
- Languages
- Environmental and Outdoor Education
- Ethics
- Locally Developed Courses

Environmental and Outdoor Education

http://education.alberta.ca/media/768718/eoed.pdf

In environmental and outdoor education, students develop interest and competence in outdoor studies and develop an understanding of their relationship to the environment. Environmental and outdoor education can be offered as a single course or as a sequence of courses, and includes:

- the basic knowledge, skills and attitudes required for safe and comfortable experiences
- awareness and appreciation of living things
- understanding of basic ecological processes
- skill, judgement, confidence and sensitivity in a range of environmentally responsible activities in outdoor settings
- lifestyle strategies that encourage responsibility for local and global environments.

GRADE 8: **OPTIONAL** SUBJECT AREAS]

- Career and Technology Studies
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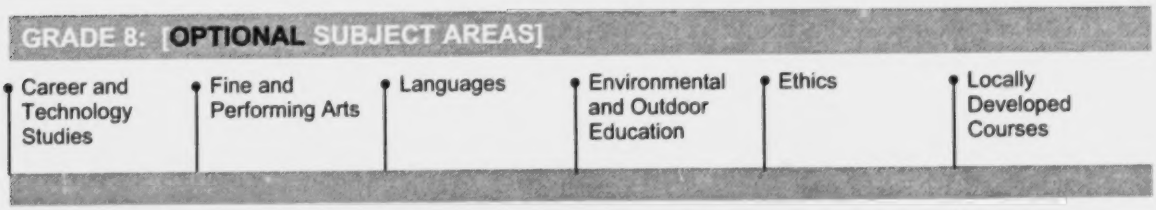
Ethics

http://education.alberta.ca/media/768722/jhethics.pdf

The ethics course is designed to help students become contributing, ethical and mature persons, and may be offered in Grade 7, Grade 8 or Grade 9. The aim of the course is to help students become more thoughtful, to think of the interests of others, and to see ethical implications in their daily lives. The ethics course includes:

- working definitions of ethics and values
- decision-making skills
- historical values and traditions
- values of different cultural groups
- responsibility to community.



Locally Developed Courses

School authorities may develop and/or acquire courses that are innovative and responsive to local and individual needs. Contact your local school authority for information about locally developed courses authorized for use in your jurisdiction.

Knowledge and Employability

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/know.aspx

Knowledge and Employability is a series of courses rather than a program. This allows schools and students to have some flexibility in offering and selecting the courses based on highest level of achievement and areas of need. These courses begin in the Grade 8 year of schooling and continue through the Grade 12 year of schooling. During grades 8–12, students may enroll in one or more courses at any appropriate entrance/registration date.

Knowledge and Employability courses are designed for the student who meets criteria specified and learns best when the focus is on the development and application of reading, writing and mathematical literacy and when meaningful connections are made between the home, school, workplace and community through experiential learning experiences. This series of courses provide students with opportunities to experience success and become well-prepared for employment, further studies, citizenship and lifelong learning.

Students who successfully complete Knowledge and Employability courses may qualify for a Certificate of High School Achievement. Students may also transfer into courses leading to an Alberta High School Diploma at any time during their senior high school career.

Knowledge and Employability courses consist of both academic and occupational courses at both the junior and senior high school levels.

Academic subjects:

- Knowledge and Employability English Language Arts 8, 9, 10-4, 20-4, 30-4
- Knowledge and Employability Mathematics 8, 9, 10-4, 20-4
- Knowledge and Employability Science 8, 9, 10-4, 20-4
- Knowledge and Employability Social Studies 8, 9, 10-4, 20-4

Occupational strands:

- Workplace Readiness
- Art/Design and Communication

- Auto Mechanics
- Business Services
- Construction: Building
- Construction: Metal Fabrication
- Cosmetology (senior high only)
- Fabrics
- Foods
- Horticulture
- Human Care
- Natural Resources (senior high only).

http://education.alberta.ca/media/524889/infomanual.pdf

For more information, refer to the *Information Manual for Knowledge and Employability Courses*, Grades 8–12, Revised 2008. The manual is available on the Alberta Education Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

Commonly Accessed Web Links

Alberta Learning Information Services (ALIS)
http://alis.alberta.ca

Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia
http://www.arpdc.ab.ca

Alberta School Boards Association School Fee Advisory
http://www.asba.ab.ca/services/policy-ad-fees07.asp

Alberta School Council Resource Manual
http://education.alberta.ca/media/464094/scm.pdf

Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA)
http://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca

Assessing Student Achievement
http://education.alberta.ca/admin/testing/achievement.aspx

Curriculum Handbooks for Parents: Senior High School
http://education.alberta.ca/parents/resources/handbook.aspx

Daily Physical Activity
http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/resources/dpa.aspx

Digital Resources to Support Curriculum Outcomes
http://learnalberta.ca

Grade Level of Achievement (GLA)
http://education.alberta.ca/media/938683/09002abedglabrocv2.pdf

Guide to Education
http://education.alberta.ca/admin/resources/guidetoed.aspx

Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs (2000)
http://education.alberta.ca/media/308566/aboriginalparenthandbook.pdf

Learning Resources Centre (LRC)
http://lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.html

The Learning Team: A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs (2003)
http://education.alberta.ca/admin/special/resources/learningteam.aspx

Middle/Junior High School Student Learning–Career Planner
http://education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/cardir_jr.pdf [pdf version]
http://education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/JHPlan.doc [word version]

Our Treasured Children
http://lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/resources/item.htm?item-no=415712

Provincial Achievement Tests
http://education.alberta.ca/admin/testing/achievement.aspx

Public Health Agency of Canada
http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/

School Act
http://www.qp.alberta.ca/574.cfm?page=s03.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779733941

School of choice information
http://education.alberta.ca/parents/choice.aspx

Student Learning–Career Planner Information Booklet
http://education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/cardir.pdf

Questionnaire

Please help us to improve this document by taking a few minutes to answer these short questions.

Circle the phrase that best completes the sentence.

1. I found the information provided about the specific subject areas was (too specific/just right/ too general).
2. I found the web links within the document were (useful/not required/problematic).
3. I found that the contact information provided was (useful/not necessary).
4. I found that the *Commonly Accessed Web Links* page was (useful/not necessary).

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1. I believe that the information provided in this document will help me to discuss my child's education with teachers and school administration. (agree/disagree)
2. I was able to locate the information I needed easily. (agree/disagree)
3. This document helped me to locate other online documents and information. (agree/disagree)

Please tell us more . . .

I felt that there was enough information in this document about _____

but, I thought that there could have been more information in this document about _____

_____.

I felt that this document was missing information about _____.

Thank you for sharing.

Please send your response to:

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